



**PRESS RELEASE**  
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## **CONGRESSMAN DAN BURTON'S STATEMENT ON HIS VOTE AGAINST THE DEMOCRAT'S ETHICS REFORM PACKAGE**

(Washington, D.C.) – Congressman Dan Burton [R-IN-05] released the following statement regarding the Democrat's opening day rules package which was passed yesterday in the House of Representatives:

"I could not in good conscience vote for the Democrats ethics bill and here is why:

- 1.) "The Democrats rules package may ban meals with lobbyists, but it still allows members and staff to claim the most abused exemption to this rule – the previous acquaintance exemption. If someone says they have a previous relationship with a lobbyist, the rules simply don't apply.
- 2.) "With regard to banning gifts from lobbyists, gifts from non-lobbyists and organizations that have no lobbyists are still permitted and are subject to the \$10, \$50 and \$100 limitations that already currently exist. How would a member or staffer know if an individual is a lobbyist unless they first check the records of thousands of lobbyists?
- 3.) "While annual ethics training for members, officers, and employees of the House sounds promising, there is no mechanism to enforce this provision of the Democrat's rules package.
- 4.) "If a member, officer, or employee refuses to participate in ethics training, the only remedy would be a question of personal privilege brought before the whole House, potentially derailing more important legislative business.
- 5.) "There are still a number of exceptions to the travel rules. The rules do not apply to travel funded by State or local governments, public or private universities, or an organization that does not employ or retain a lobbyist. How would a member or staffer know if an organization employs a lobbyist unless they first check the records of thousands of lobbyists?
- 6.) "Although the rules package seeks to prohibit lobbyists and entities that employ them from paying for private travel, travel for a meeting, speaking engagement, factfinding trip, or similar event that includes no more than an overnight stay is still permissible.

- 7.) “If travel occurs prior to March 1, 2007, none of the restrictions apply.
- 8.) “The Democrats boast about ending the ‘K-Street Project’, but this type of behavior is already prohibited by Federal law and the House Code of Conduct.

“I believe that instead of coming up with new reporting requirements that members and staff can inadvertently violate, the only true solution is to have complete transparency and reportability.”

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